



Conservation Successes - October 2004

"Strangest trash" prize and a cleaner river motivates 130 volunteers

Groundwork Elizabeth Leads River Clean Up

Elizabeth, NJ (October 16, 2004) - The First Annual Elizabeth River Clean up Day was hosted and organized by Groundwork Elizabeth, an Elizabeth-based non-profit organization which improves and promotes of the physical environment of the city. "It is truly amazing how many volunteers showed up today", remarked Phyllis Reich, a Groundwork Elizabeth volunteer. The 130 volunteers represented a great variety of educational, civic, and religious organizations, including the City of Elizabeth as a key



partner. Hundreds of bags of riverbank trash were collected during the 3 hour cleanup and several prizes were awarded for the "strangest trash" found at the cleanup. Elder Merrell of the Church of Latter Day Saints found a truck headlight, and Sal Coppa and Jose Irizarry of the Independent Cleaning Company found an antique ironing board. Tom's of Maine, the National Park Foundation and the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program worked together to provide funding and technical assistance for this event. For more information, please contact Cyndi Szymanski at Cynthia_szymanski@nps.gov or (202) 354-6912.

Dedication of new Ice Age Trail Segment and Trailhead

United States Representative Tammy Baldwin recognized

Baraboo, WI (August 30, 2004) - Over the last several years, with the help of funding from the NPS Challenge Cost Share Program, the Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation's (IAPTF) Mobile Skills Crew (MSC) and staff from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources have constructed 2.25 miles of Ice Age Trail through an ancient river valley, built a trailhead parking lot, begun a 500 acre prairie restoration, and installed wayside exhibits to interpret this geologically complex landscape. To dedicate the new segment and show their appreciation,



IAPTF Executive Director Christine Thisted presented Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin with a "Friend of the Trail" plaque, their highest award at a ceremony at Devil's Lake State Park. Ice Age Trail Superintendent Tom Gilbert gave the Congresswoman a laminated copy of the Ice Age Trail's generic wayside exhibit. IAPTF MSC leader Tim Malzhan then lead a hike on the newly constructed trail. For more information, please contact Pam Schuler, Manager, Ice Age Trail, at Pam_Schuler@nps.gov or 608-441-5610.

Seattle Suburb Seeks to Save Spaces from Speedy Sprawl

Local Friends group works with County, Cities and developers to craft conservation plan

King County, WA (September 2004) - Friends of Rock Creek Valley (FRCV) announced the purchase of 135 acres fee simple of the Ravensdale Retreat Property, which includes over a mile of protection for salmon habitat in Rock Creek. The purchase of this property is one of many in the Valley aimed at conserving the area's resources and pro-actively guiding development. To

date, the FRCV have worked with federal, state, county and municipal agencies to conserve over 2,000 acres. The National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program helped with community outreach including training, trail inventory, and workshops. The workshops brought together agencies, local cities, interested citizens, and developers to create the Rock Creek Valley Conservation Plan. The plan acts as a unified blueprint for the community, detailing parcels for wildlife habitat, recreation, viewsheds, salmon and other elements identified as important by local residents, developers, and scientists. The FRCV and RTCA have been working together for the past two years to develop the conservation plan. For more information on FRCV and to view Rock Creek Valley Conservation plan please go to www.frcv.org or contact Dan Miller, RTCA Community Planner, at dan_miller@nps.gov or 206-220-4122.



Abandoned Navy Housing Area Becomes Urban Park

Community obtains second parcel to complete their new multi-purpose park

Pensacola, FL (August 26, 2004) -The National Park Service's Federal Lands to Parks program transferred, at no cost, a 12.935-acre parcel containing abandoned military houses to Escambia County, FL, for public park and recreation use. Valued at over \$800,000, this parcel is the remaining portion of a 42-acre military housing property which was too cost-prohibitive to renovate. In 2002, the Federal Lands to Parks Program conveyed the major portion (30 acres) of this abandoned facility to Escambia County for a new community park. Now that the County has obtained all of this closed facility, they are eager to complete the development of ballfields, a community recreation center, and the terminus for the Jones Swamp Trail, a cross-county urban trail. NPS Federal Lands to Parks staff negotiated the transfer. For information, please contact Bill Huie, Federal Lands to Parks Program Manager, at Bill_Huie@nps.gov or 404-562-3175.

Santa Fe Trail Site Ready for Visitors

Springer, NM (October 2004) - Point of Rocks, a privately owned historic site on the Santa Fe National Historic Trail, is ready for visitors, thanks to a five-way partnership facilitated by the National Park Service (NPS). Faye Gaines, owner of the Point of Rocks Ranch, opened her site to the public and approved several new facilities for visitor comfort and enjoyment. A site plan and shelter design were provided by National Park Service landscape architect Steve Burns, of the NPS Santa Fe trails office, and a crew from Fort Union National Monument poured a concrete



shelter foundation at the site. Over Labor Day weekend, volunteers from the Corazon de los Caminos Chapter of the Santa Fe Trail Association and Santa Fe's Boy Scout Troop 53 gathered at the site to complete the project. The volunteers built a new picnic shelter and parking area, installed a new National Historic Trail site identification sign and NPS wayside exhibit, and constructed a pedestrian turnstile through a cattle fence. There already was a restroom on site, courtesy of the New Mexico Scenic Byway program. The project was funded through the Santa Fe Trail Association and an NPS Challenge Cost-Share Program grant. For more information, please contact John Conoboy, NPS Santa Fe at john_conoboy@nps.gov or 505-988-6888.

Natural Resources District Recognizes Trail Builders

New Trail Opportunity in Eastern Nebraska

Lincoln, NE (October 20, 2004) - The Nebraska Horse Council's Horse Trails Committee volunteers recently complete clearing 13 miles of back country to create the Oak Creek Natural Trail. The natural surface path parallels the hard surface biker/hiker trail. The National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program provided information on trail design and location to minimize impact while creating a challenging trail for both horseback riders and mountain bikers. The trail takes advantage of the rolling hills, scenic valleys, and open plains of eastern Nebraska. The trail opened this past spring and was the site of the 2004 Mother's Day Trail Ride. Fifty-nine women and three men rode the entire route from Valparaiso to Loma, NE and back. Oak Creek Trail, located entirely in a rural setting, has been recognized as a positive economic benefit in the small rural communities where trailheads are located. The Lower Platte South Natural Resources District presented the Horse Trails Committee of the Nebraska Horse Council with a special recognition award for their work on the trail. For more information, please contact Mary Hanson, RTCA Outdoor Recreation Planner, at mary_hanson@nps.gov or 402-661-1554.



Locally-Led Efforts Contribute to Arroyo Seco Watershed Restoration

New Park Opens and Habitat Restoration Underway

Pasadena & South Pasadena, CA (October 22, 2004) - Efforts to restore the Arroyo Seco Watershed are well underway this autumn, with the opening of a new 4-acre nature park and the commencement of a 40-acre



habitat restoration project. A grassroots efforts that included local schools and students is protecting one of the last remaining patches of open space in the watershed. Citizens of South Pasadena worked successfully with local Congressman Adam Schiff and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy to acquire and develop the 4-acre Woodland and Wildlife Park, which was formally dedicated on October 16, 2004. As a natural area adjacent to the Arroyo Seco stream, this park will contribute to the vision for a restored Arroyo Seco Watershed and be part of a network of linked habitat and recreational spaces throughout the watershed.

Through partnership with community-based groups in the watershed, the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA) supported the development of the Arroyo Seco Watershed Restoration Feasibility Study, which examined the potential for restoring the Arroyo Seco Watershed. RTCA assisted in convening key stakeholders in the watershed to facilitate the development of the plan. Long-term restoration of the watershed outlined in the plan will be incremental as individual projects, such as the Woodland and Wildlife Park and Pasadena's stream restoration, are realized. For more information, please contact Anne Dove, Outdoor Recreation Planner, at Anne_Dove@nps.gov or 323-441-9307

Northern Forest Canoe Trail Dedicates Both Ends of the Trail

206 miles of water trail completed

Old Forge, NY to Fort Kent, ME (September 2004) - Two events in September marked the official opening of the Northern Forest Canoe Trail (NFCT). The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program was instrumental in establishing 206 miles of the 740-mile Northern Forest Canoe Trail. This long-distance water trail

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is based on pre-mechanized travel routes through the forests of northern New England. Working with Northern Forest Canoe Trail, Inc, RTCA staff established local committees in Old Forge and Saranac Lake, New York and Fort Kent, Maine. The committees compiled photos, contacted landowners, field checked the route, and researched and wrote local history, paddling guidance, and route descriptions for two maps in each state. This information was also used to create trailhead kiosks at the western and eastern gateways to the trail. In September 2004, the maps and kiosks were unveiled and the trail dedicated at events attended by local and state officials and trail supporters. RTCA staff has also worked with local committees in Vermont and New Hampshire and with other committees in New York and Maine. The RTCA program provided the critical public outreach for this long-distance water trail, including creation of two campsites and a portage trail, management of a Stewardship Awards program, assistance with a sign manual and history publication, and organizational development. For more information please contact Julie Isbill, RTCA Project Manager, Brunswick, ME at julie_isbill@nps.gov or 207-725-5028.



Over 150 Celebrate in Western Maryland

First five miles of Allegheny Highlands Trail completed

Frostburg, MD (October 8, 2004) - A perfect autumn day dawned to celebrate the completion of the first five miles of the Allegheny Highlands Trail Maryland (AHTM). One of seven trails that comprise the Great Allegheny Passage, which links Cumberland and Pittsburgh, the AHTM was officially opened and recognized by an enthusiastic group of individuals, representatives of citizen groups and businesses, and government officials. In September 2003 the Great Allegheny Passage, which will connect with the western terminus of the C & O Canal Towpath in Cumberland, was designated a segment of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail. For more information, please see www.ahtmtrail.org or www.atatrail.org, or contact Bill Atkinson, Maryland Office of Planning, at 301-777-2161, or Don Briggs, Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail Office, at 304-535-4016.



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Simon Kenton Trail Extended

Regional network expanded with six-mile addition

Urbana, Ohio (October 17, 2004) - Over 130 trail enthusiasts celebrated the opening of six additional miles of the Simon Kenton Trail on Sunday. The new trail segment links the existing Simon Kenton Trail into the center of Urbana. The trail now connects Urbana with Springfield, OH and is part of a regional trail network continuing on south to Cincinnati and eventually east and north to Columbus and Cleveland. The trail resulted from work by the Simon Kenton Trail Pathfinders who worked very closely with the Champaign County Engineer, Urbana Parks and Recreation Department, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the Ohio Department of Transportation. Funding for the current section was obtained with assistance from Congressman Dave Hobson. The National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program helped the newly formed Pathfinders navigate state and federal programs for trail development. Paul Labovitz, Program leader, RTCA/Midwest Region helped cut the ribbon to open the new trail. For more information, please contact Paul Labovitz, Program leader, RTCA/Midwest Region at paul_labovitz@nps.gov or 330-657-2950.



Conservation Successes informs Department of Interior staff, conservation partners, and friends about the program successes of the National Center for Recreation and Conservation. For more details, please contact the staff person involved with each project.

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